

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BUENOS 03819 241227Z
ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0628

SECRET BUENOS AIRES 3819

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR PINR AR (MONTES, OSCAR ANTONIO)
SUBJECT: VICE ADMIRAL OSCAR MONTES NAMED FOREIGN MINISTER

VICE ADMIRAL OSCAR ANTONIO MONTES WAS SWORN IN TODAY (MAY 23) AS THE
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND WORSHIP, REPLACING CONVALESCING
ADMIRAL GUZZETTI. UNTIL HIS APPOINTMENT, MONTES WAS CHIEF OF
OPERATIONS OF THE NAVY GENERAL STAFF. MONTES, WHO WAS MENTIONED
AS A CANDIDATE FOR FOREIGN MINISTER BEFORE GUZZETTI WAS NAMED
A YEAR AGO, IS KNOWN FOR HIS INTELLIGENCE, COMPETENCE, STRICT
LOYALTY AND STRONG MORAL CHARACTER AND IS EXPECTED TO FAITHFULLY
REPRESENT THE VIEWS OF NAVY CINC MASSERA IN HIS NEW ROLE AS
FOREIGN MINISTER. MILITARY CONTACTS DESCRIBE MONTES AS PRO-
AMERICAN AND ANTI-COMMUNIST. HE IS ALSO SAID
TO BE INTERESTED IN POLITICS.

MONTES IS NOT KNOWN FOR HIS ABILITY OR INTEREST IN FOREIGN
AFFAIRS AND HAS APPARENTLY HAD LITTLE EXPERIENCE IN FOREIGN
POLICY MATTERS. HE IS REPORTEDLY IMPRESSED BY RANK AND POWER
AND COULD BE SWAYED BY HIS SUPERIORS.

MILITARY SOURCES SAY THAT ALTHOUGH MONTES LACKS EXPERIENCE
IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS, HE IS A CAPABLE OFFICER, AFFABLE AND
FRIENDLY IN SOCIAL SITUATIONS AND SHOULD NOT SIGNIFICANTLY
DEPART FROM POLICIES AND ATTITUDES ADOPTED DURING GUZZETTI'S
TENURE. MONTES, AGE 53, HAS TAUGHT NAVAL MANAGEMENT AND
SERVED AS COMMANDING OFFICER ON THE TRAINING SHIP LIBERTAD.
HE WAS ASSISTANT NAVAL ATTACHE IN RIO DE JANEIRO FROM 1970

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TO 1972, CHIEF OF NAVAL INTELLIGENCE FROM JANUARY 1973 TO
JANUARY 1974, AND COMMANDER OF PUERTO BELGRANO NAVAL BASE
FROM 1974 TO 1975. MONTES HAS BEEN DECORATED BY THE SPANISH
AND DANISH GOVERNMENTS. HE SPEAKS ONLY SPANISH AND APPARENTLY
HAS NOT TRAVELED TO THE US.

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Message Attributes

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Subject: VICE ADMIRAL OSCAR MONTES NAMED FOREIGN MINISTER VICE ADMIRAL OSCAR ANTONIO MONTES WAS SWORN IN TODAY (MAY 23) AS THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND WORSHIP, REPLACING
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